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THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS

There has been a growing feeling among teachers that there should be an organization devoted to advancing the teaching of geography. As a result of discussion at the meeting of the National Education Association in 1914, and of extensive correspondence, the desirability of forming such an association, together with a general plan of organization, was presented to the Association of American Geographers at their Chicago meeting in December, 1914, and met with their hearty approval. Professors R. E. Dodge, R. H. Whitbeck, and C. R. Dryer were delegated as a committee to co-operate with those who had taken the initial steps. This committee was enlarged to include Professors L. O. Packard, Charles C. Colby, and George J. Miller, and thereupon proceeded to seek the co-operation of others in creating the National Council of Geography Teachers.

The first meeting of this committee was held in Chicago in December, 1914, and the general plan of organization was decided upon. It was the opinion of the committee that the greatest immediate good could be accomplished by securing the co-operation of leaders in each state who would assume the responsibility of organizing a state council of geography teachers. Representatives from each state council could then constitute the board of directors of the national council. In accordance with this plan the committee requested a geographer in each state to organize a state council. In those states in which no geographer was known to the committee the state department of education or the state university was requested to recommend someone to take charge of the work.

The hearty response from all parts of the United States was most encouraging. In some states officials of the state department of education or a city superintendent have assumed the responsibility of organizing an association of geography teachers. This indicates a keen appreciation among school officials of the need for such an organization and of the splendid opportunity to do constructive work. Leaders have been secured in thirty-eight states (see map), and the enthusiasm and prompt activity of many has been most encouraging. Sixteen leaders have completed organizations in their respective states (Ohio has been added since the map was prepared). In nearly all these states meetings have been held and programs have been given. The attendance at these first meetings has been very gratifying, varying from a dozen to more than 350. Ten other leaders report (to date) that their state organization will be complete within a year. It is likely, therefore, that by the end of another year state councils of geography teachers will be actively at work in nearly three-fourths of the states. In some states local societies have been formed, e. g. the Bay Council of Geography Teachers in California and the Minneapolis and St. Paul Associations in Minnesota. In several other states local organizations of a geographic character but not emphasizing the teaching phase of the subject were already in existence.

In most states the organization of geography teachers has been established as an independent association but affiliated with the state teachers' association and meeting with it. In some states it is a section of the larger teachers' association, and in others it is a part of the state science association. Organization as a part of the state teachers' association or affiliation with it seems to be the more desirable plan. Either of these plans enables the geographers to interest a much larger number of teachers and school officials, to carry their influence more completely throughout the state, to increase the funds available for constructive work, to lessen the number of separate meetings, and to make available the enthusiasm of larger numbers.

Work of great value can be accomplished by each state organization. Within a few years there should be a council of geography teachers in every state and it should undertake some definite task, the completion of which will advance the teaching of geography

in the schools of that state. The Bay Council of Geography Teachers of California has already undertaken such a task. They are now at work on "Materials and Methods of Map Work in the Grades and High Schools." The Minnesota state association will undertake the preparation of a course of study for the elementary schools of the state. It is probable that other associations are planning work of similar type.

By the generous co-operation of the publishers of the *Journal of Geography* that journal has been made the official organ of the National Council and will be included with the annual dues of one dollar. In addition the American Geographical Society has tendered assistance of great value. This society publishes in its monthly magazine, the *Geographical Review*, articles of inestimable value to every teacher of geography. From time to time appropriate articles will be sent to each member of the National Council of Geography Teachers. Membership fees may be sent to the Treasurer, Mr. Vernor

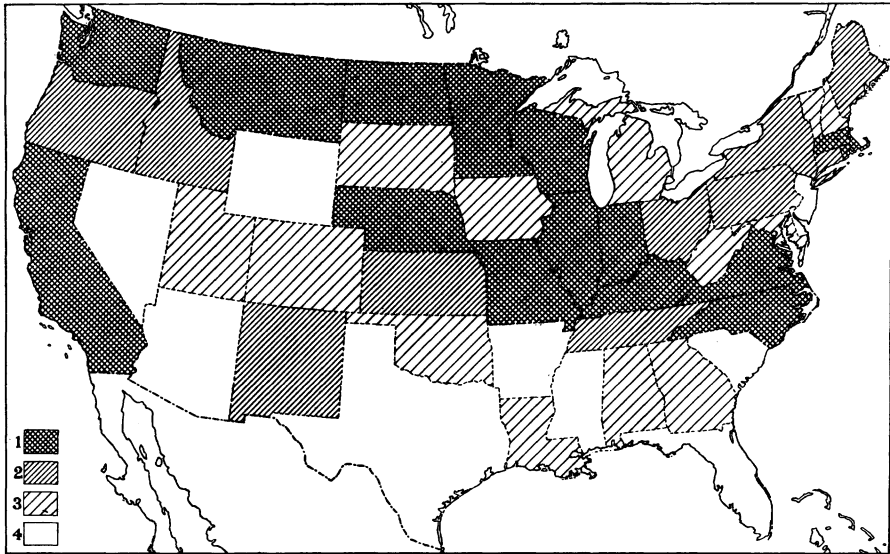


FIG. 1—Progress in organization of state associations of geography teachers during 1915.

- 1—State organization completed (Ohio has been added since the map was prepared).
- 2—State organization will probably be completed in 1916.
- 3—Leaders have been appointed.
- 4—No leader secured.

C. Finch, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis. Probably no other association of teachers offers so much of value to its members for so small a fee.

The final plan of organization of the National Council of Geography Teachers was worked out at the meeting in Washington in January of this year. The constitution provides for a Board of Directors, an Executive Committee, and executive officers. The Board of Directors consists of fifty members made up of (a) representatives of the affiliated associations of geography teachers, and (b) members at large. The Executive Committee consists of nine members, three of whom are to be chosen annually, and the executive officers are a president, two vice-presidents, a secretary, and a treasurer. The administration of the affairs of the Council are in the hands of the Executive Committee and the executive officers.

The officers chosen for the year 1916 are as follows: President, Richard E. Dodge, Teachers College, New York City; First Vice-President, Albert P. Brigham, Colgate University, Hamilton, N. Y.; Second Vice-President, Charles R. Dryer, Fort Wayne,

Ind.; Secretary and Chairman of the Executive Committee, George J. Miller, State Normal School, Mankato, Minn.; Treasurer, Vernor C. Finch, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.

The Executive Committee consists of the following:

George J. Miller, State Normal School, Mankato, Minn.; Richard E. Dodge, Teachers College, New York City; Charles R. Dryer, Fort Wayne, Ind.; R. H. Whitbeck, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.; L. O. Packard, Boston Normal School, Boston, Mass.; James F. Chamberlain, State Normal School, Los Angeles, Cal.; Charles C. Colby, Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn.; F. V. Emerson, University of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, La.; N. A. Bengtson, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebr.

The Board of Directors consists of the following: Jane K. Atwood, State Normal School, Emporia, Kan.; George A. Barker, State Teachers College, Greeley, Colo.; N. A. Bengtson, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebr.; C. T. Boggess, State Normal School, West Liberty, W. Va.; Dr. Isaiah Bowman, Director, American Geographical Society, New York City; Robert M. Brown, State Normal School, Providence, R. I.; J. E. Buchanan, State Normal School, Cheney, Wash.; E. J. Cable, State Teachers College, Cedar Rapids, Ia.; Frank Carney, Denison University, Granville, O.; James F. Chamberlain, State Normal School, Los Angeles, Cal.; W. W. Clendenin, Wadleigh High School, New York City; Dr. Collier Cobb, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N. C.; C. C. Colby, Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn.; Sumner W. Cushing, State Normal School, Salem, Mass.; President C. W. Daugette, State Normal School, Jacksonville, Ala.; Dr. F. V. Emerson, University of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, La.; O. W. Freeman, Fergus County High School, Lewiston, Mont.; Grant E. Finch, State Normal School, Dillon, Mont.; R. P. Green, State Normal School, Bowling Green, Ky.; Dr. R. S. Holway, University of California, Berkeley, Cal.; Mark Jefferson, State Normal School, Ypsilanti, Mich.; President Willis E. Johnson, State Normal and Industrial School, Aberdeen, S. Dak.; Loulie C. Kelley, John Marshall High School, Richmond, Va.; Frank Merrill, State Normal School, Athens, Ga.; L. O. Packard, Boston Normal School, Boston, Mass.; Dr. A. E. Parkins, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.; E. E. Philbrook, State Normal School, Castine, Me.; C. J. Posey, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn.; C. E. Pratt, State Normal School, New Britain, Conn.; Ernest E. Race, State Normal School, Baltimore, Md.; Joseph Reed, State Normal School, Lewiston, Idaho; Dr. G. B. Roorbach, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.; Dr. R. D. Salisbury, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.; B. H. Schockel, State Normal School, Terre Haute, Ind.; Howard E. Simpson, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, N. Dak.; Bolton Smith, Memphis, Tenn.; James Smith, Austin High School, Chicago, Ill.; Dr. Warren D. Smith, University of Oregon, Eugene, Ore.; Mabel Stark, State Normal University, Normal, Ill.; C. H. Taylor, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Okla.; Alice Wessa, State Normal School, Buffalo, N. Y.; R. H. Whitbeck, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.; G. H. Whitcher, State Department of Education, Concord, N. H.; Alvan N. White, State Superintendent of Education, Santa Fe, N. Mex.; W. H. Young, Superintendent of Schools, St. Johnsbury, Vt.; Anna Youngberg, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The purpose of the National Council, as stated in its constitution, is to increase the effectiveness of geography teaching in the schools of America. It therefore wishes to do everything possible to assist state or local associations. The Secretary will appreciate any suggestions that have as their object the bettering of geography teaching, or suggestions of ways in which the National Council may be of assistance. He will be glad to receive the names and addresses of teachers who are interested in geography.

GEORGE J. MILLER.